

Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 SCI-06 EB-11 AID-20 OIC-04

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-03 ARA-16 EA-11

EUR-25 NEA-14 SS-20 NSC-07 SP-03 /176 R

DRAFTED BY IO/SCT: LTTHOMPSON

APPROVED BY IO: JMC DONALD

IO/SCT - JTREVITHICK

SCI - WHTAFT

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P 082235Z JUL 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

UNCLAS STATE 146854

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV

SUBJECT: 57TH ECOSOC: KENYAN PROPOSAL FOR A SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

REF.: GENEVA 4291

1. U.S. DEL SHOULD DISCOURAGE KENYANS FROM TABLING THEIR
DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR A UN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM
ECOSOC AGENDA ALREADY OVERLY LONG BECAUSE OF ISSUES
ARISING AT UNGA SPECIAL SESSION. WE SHOULD TRY TO REDUCE
EXISTING WORKLOAD BEFORE TACKLING A NEW PROPOSAL OF THIS
SCOPE. DEL SHOULD ALSO QUESTION THE APPROPRIATENESS OF
ECOSOC AS THE FORUM FOR CONSIDERING THE KENYAN PROPOSAL IN
THE FIRST INSTANCE. ECOSOC COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY (CSTD) WAS FORMED FOR THIS PURPOSE.

2. U.S. DEL SHOULD BLUNTLY TELL KENYANS THAT, IF
INTRODUCED, WE WILL OPPOSE THEIR PROPOSAL. ANOTHER NEW
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AGENCY AND FUND AT THIS TIME IS MORE THAN DOCKET WILL BEAR.

ALREADY IN THE PROCESS OF FORMATION ARE THE HUMAN SETTLEMENTS FOUNDATION (IHHSF) COMING OUT OF THE MARCH 1974 UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING IN NAIROBI, THE SPECIAL FUND CREATED BY THE UNGA SPECIAL SESSION, THE NATURAL RESOURCES REVOLVING FUND, AND THE UN FERTILIZER POOL OR FUND. ANOTHER NEW PROGRAM AND FUND WOULD HOPELESSLY OVERLOAD UN SYSTEM AND WILLINGNESS OF MEMBER STATES TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY.

3. EVEN IF TIMING WERE BETTER, KENYAN PROPOSAL IS NOT, IN OUR VIEW, FEASIBLE APPROACH TO PROBLEMS OF APPLYING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO DEVELOPMENT. THE PROPOSED PROGRAM IS MODELLED ON UNEP, BUT CONCEPT OF UNEP EVOLVED AFTER YEARS OF PREPARATORY EFFORTS LEADING UP TO STOCKHOLM. ENVIRONMENT WAS A NEW SUBJECT FOR MUCH OF UN SYSTEM. CONVERSELY, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IS ALREADY A MAJOR PROGRAM COMPONENT OF MANY UN AGENCIES. CREATION OF A NEW PROGRAM WOULD MERELY ADD ANOTHER AGENCY TO THOSE ALREADY ASSISTING THE LDC'S AND DO SO AT THE COST OF FINANCING A NEW SECRETARIAT AND ORGANIZATION. FAR BETTER WOULD BE TO IMPROVE COORDINATION AND COOPERATION AMONG EXISTING AGENCIES TO ASSIGN A HIGHER PRIORITY TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE UN, AND TO AVOID PROLIFERATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES. THUS FAR, THE KENYAN PROPOSAL HAS RECEIVED ONLY CURSORY EXAMINATION AND, EVEN IF A NEED FOR A NEW APPROACH TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE UN HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED, THIS PROPOSAL IS ONLY ONE OF MANY CONCEIVABLE OPTIONS.

4. ONE ALTERNATIVE TO THE KENYAN PROPOSAL WHICH IS ALREADY UNDER CONSIDERATION IS THE PROPOSED UN CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. THE CSTD RESOLUTION ON THIS SUBJECT OFFERS A REASONABLE TIMETABLE AND APPROACH TO A COMPLEX SUBJECT AND GIVES THE UN SYSTEM AND MEMBERS SUFFICIENT TIME TO CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE FULL RANGE OF PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THIS FIELD. THE KENYAN PROPOSAL WOULD UNDERMINE THE INITIAL PROCESS OF EXAMINATION OF THE NEED AND OBJECTIVES FOR SUCH A CONFERENCE. WE SHOULD BEGIN BY DEFINING THE PROBLEMS AND APPLYING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO DEVELOPMENT AND HENCE, PROCEED TO EXAMINE POSSIBLE ACTION TO OVERCOME SUCH PROBLEMS.

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THE KENYAN PROPOSAL TURNS THIS PROCESS AROUND, CREATES A NEW ORGANIZATION, AND, LATER, DECIDES UPON ITS FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

5. ONE FEATURE OF THE KENYAN PROPOSAL WHICH MAY HAVE MERIT IS THE IDEA OF COMBINING THE UN OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES. THE U.S. ONCE PROPOSE COMBINING THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL

RESOURCES AND CSTD AND OUR PROPOSAL FAILED FOR LACK OF SUPPORT. THIS DRAFT RES OPENS UP THE POSSIBILITY FOR REEXAMINING THE FEASIBILITY OF COMBINING THE TWO UN OFFICES AND TWO COMMITTEES INTO A SINGLE STRENGTHENED UNIT WITH BROADER RESPONSIBILITIES IN SEVERAL RELATED FIELDS. U.S. DEL MAY, AS APPROPRIATE, SUPPORT A FURTHER EVALUATION OF THIS IDEA.

6. DEPT. HAS THE IMPRESSION THAT KENYAN PROPOSAL DOES NOT HAVE THE ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT OF THE LDCS. IN SURVEY CONDUCTED BEFORE 1973 UNGA, NO COUNTRY EXPRESSED STRONG SUPPORT FOR KENYAN PROPOSAL. LIKEWISE, AT 1974 CSTD SESSION, KENYA REFERRED TO ITS PROPOSAL BUT NOBODY LEAPED FORWARD TO ENDORSE IT, NOR WAS IT EVEN MENTIONED BY ANY OTHER COUNTRY AS A POSSIBLE ITEM FOR FUTURE CSTD CONSIDERATION.

7. REQUEST GENEVA TO REPEAT ALL CABLES ON THIS SUBJECT FOR NAIROBI. IF THIS DEVELOPS INTO A FULLY-FLEDGED ISSUE, WE MAY WISH TO ASK NAIROBI TO EXPLAIN OUR POSITION TO KENYAN GOVERNMENT. SISCO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENT DRAFT, TEXT, SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION, COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 JUL 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE146854
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: LTTHOMPSON
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740181-0406
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740767/aaaacfmd.tel
Line Count: 136
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: : GENEVA 4291
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinml
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 OCT 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 OCT 2002 by ThomasVJ>; APPROVED <15 JAN 2003 by martinml>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: 57TH ECOSOC: KENYAN PROPOSAL FOR A SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM
TAGS: SENV, US, KE
To: GENEVA NAIROBI
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005